(e) whether the element of pollution control is also taken into consideration ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT) WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY) (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI) : (a) Fuel efficiency based concessional customs/excise duty was earlier extended to various types of automotive vehicles. However, after the budget 1993-94, only light commercial vehicles are enjoying concessional excise duty (10% as against the normal duty of 15%) based on fuel efficiency.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. There has been an improvement in fuel efficiency as a result of the fiscal concessions linked to fuel efficiency.

(d) and (e) A Standing Committee on Fuel Efficiency has been constituted to suggest futuristic norms of fuel efficiency for automotive vehicles. The element of pollution control is not presently included in its terms of reference.

Malpractices by KVIC

3210. SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the irregularity in disbursement of loans by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission as reported in Nav Bharat Times dated 7th April, 1993 ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ; and

(c) what measures Government have adopted to check the malpractices ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES) (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c) Government have received complaints regarding some alleged irregularities in KVIC and some of these complaints appeared in the news item of Nav Bharat Times, dated 7-4-1993. Some of the major complaints received relate to :

(i) Supply of mill-made barrack blankets to DGS&D ;

(ii) Disbursement of loans in Meerut region by KVIC without obtaining feasibility report etc. ;

(iii) Appointment of officers in KVIC, violating Govt.'s ban order ;

(iv) Excess Administrative expenditure in KVIC.

An enquiry has been conducted by an Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Industry regarding some complaints. Action has already been initiated by the Government on the basis of his report. Government has also issued some directives to the commission which are as under :

(i) not to register any new institution for manufacture of Khadi including polyvastra excepting in areas selected for special employment programme ;

(ii) no new institutions for village industry should be directly aided by KVIC. In all such cases, they should be financed by State KVI Board ;

(iii) KVIC should immediately review the functioning of the institutions which have been registered during the last three years and send a report to the Govt. of India ;

(iv) Commission should not purchase any property without getting separate allocation of funds for this purpose in the budget approved by the Central Government ;

(v) The present Commission should not sanction any funds to any society/institution till the new Commission is constituted.

Khadi and Village Industries Commission in Tripura

3211. SHRI SUDHIR RANJAN MAJUMDAR : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the officer-in-charge of Tripura Unit of the commission is involved in a number of litigation cases concerning the employees ;

(b) if so, what steps the commission has taken to end the litigations to restore work culture in that unit ;

(c) whether it is a fact that no top official of this organisation has visited the unit in spite of the closure of many production centre ;

(d) whether it is a fact that the unit in Tripura is in moribund condition being neglected by the Commission ;

(e) if so, whether many workers have become unemployed losing their wages as a result of closure of so many production centres ;

(f) whether there is any proposal to revitalise the Production Centres and reopen those which are closed ;

(g) how many centres are operating and how many workers are employed in them ;

(h) how many Centres have been closed and how many workers have been rendered unemployed ;

(i) whether it is a fact that the Sales counters of the Khadi Commission is running at a loss for making non-functional without any stock in tense sales counters for sales except some old stock ;

(j) what are sale proceeds of the Agartala Sale counter of the Agartala Sale unit for the last two years ; and

(k) whether there is any proposal to overhaul the entire set up in Tripura to put it on rail ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES) (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (k) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Control of News Print

3212. SHRI IQBAL SINGH :
SHRI SURESH PACHOURI :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering proposal for the control of news print ;

(b) if so, whether Government have asked the concerned authorities to implement the Kelkar Committee's report and to do away with the News Print Control Order ;

(c) whether the Present News Print Policy has severally affected the validity of news print mills mostly set up in Public Sector ; and

(d) if so, whether the Kelkar Committee was set up in 1988 to make recommendations for a long term News Print Policy but its recommendations have so far not been fully implemented ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT) WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY) (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI) : (a) and (b) There is no statutory control on the price and sale of newsprint. The import of newsprint has also been decanalised with effect from 1-4-92. However, import of newsprint is restricted and governed by the quota specified in the EXIM Policy. There is no proposal under consideration of the Government to do away with the newsprint control order.

(c) The newsprint mills have reported that their stocks have accumulated as newspapers have not been lifting their newsprint due to availability of large quantity of imported newsprint in the market at dumping prices and without any import duty. Therefore, some of them have cut down their production.

(d) Most of the recommendations of the Kelkar Committee have been implemented.

Opening of New Industries in Punjab by NRIs

3213. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state what steps Government have taken so far to attract NRIs to invest in and open new industries in Punjab ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT) WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY) (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI) : The Govt. of India have permitted the NRIs and Overseas Corporate Bodies predominantly owned by them to invest up to 100% foreign equity in high priority and other industries with full benefits of repatriation of capital invested and income accruing thereon, subject to certain conditions. Recently, the Govt. have permitted NRIs to invest in Housing and Real Estate also.

According to the Govt. of Punjab, the following steps have been taken to attract NRIs investment in the State :—

(i) an industrial facilitation cell called "Udyog Sahayak" which has been in existence since 1981, has been recently revamped to provide expeditious 'single window clearance' to applications for NRI investment ;

(ii) 5% of plots available in various focal points/industrial areas have been earmarked for allotment to NRIs on priority basis ;

(iii) A Special Scheme entitled "Off-The-Shelf Scheme" has been introduced for allotment of plots to genuine entrepreneurs ;

(iv) an escort service to the genuine entrepreneurs, who wish to set up units in Punjab, has been introduced;

(v) an office of the Commissioner of NRI Industrial Liaison has been set up in New Delhi ;

(vi) with a view to facilitate industrial growth, the State Govt. has decided that Inspectors of 12 Departments would not visit various industrial establishments ; instead a system of self-compliance by the industrial units has been introduced, on a pilot basis, in Mohali.